

Opponent Testimony for SB1
Ohio Senate Education Committee
2/11/2025

Joshua Gluck, Medical Student

Chair Andrew O. Brenner, Vice Chair Louis W. Blessing, Ranking Member Catherine D. Ingram, and members of the Ohio Senate Education Committee,

Thank you for allowing me to testify today. My name is Joshua Gluck, he/him. I am a first year medical student here in Columbus, and a lifelong resident of the state of Ohio. I am here to testify against SB1 on behalf of myself as an Ohioan and a future physician.

I grew up in Bay Village, OH, a small suburb outside of Cleveland. Bay Village is a great place to live, but it is not very culturally or racially diverse. My exposure to other cultures and ideas has only benefited my education. The bill seeks to limit teaching of controversial topics and the promotion of diversity, equity, and inclusion. I came to medical school because I want to be able to provide the best care to ALL patients. This bill, if passed, will limit my education and my practice as a future physician. Allow me to give an example.

My first month of school, we had a patient panel from individuals suffering from sickle cell anemia, a debilitating blood disease that causes episodes of excruciating pain during flare-ups. Among other therapies, one of the core parts of treating these exacerbations is opiate medication. Since sickle cell is a chronic illness, these patients know how they have been treated before, and often request specific treatments upon admission to the hospital. This disease predominantly affects African-Americans since it is a genetic disorder. During my patient panel, they described the discrimination and bias that they experienced when seeking treatment due to people assuming they were drug-seeking because of their behavior and race. These patients can be withheld treatment and kept in excruciating pain when harmful assumptions are made based on race.

As someone who did not grow up in the African-American community, experiences like these patient panels are the way I've learned about discrimination in medicine. I was uncomfortable listening to these patients' stories, because it hurt me to hear how they had been treated. Discussion of uncomfortable, controversial topics such as racism and its impact on medical outcomes would be limited by the language outlined in SB1, and experiences like these would be lost. I would be a worse doctor for it, and our community will suffer because Doctors will be less able to recognize and prevent bias that contributes to worse health outcomes.

I am testifying on behalf of myself as a medical student, future physician, and most importantly patients I will serve. Uncomfortable conversations about controversial topics are necessary for growth and education. I ask that you please consider my testimony and vote no on SB1.